

Message Text

SECRET

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22

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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P 250940Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7897

S E C R E T MOSCOW 13374

EXDIS

FOR HARTMAN, EUR FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3, 4

TAGS: PFOR, US, UR

SUBJECT: VISA OF SVYATOSLAV ALEKSEYEVICH STEPANOV

REF: STATE 209293

1. IT IS OUR RECOLLECTION THAT, WHEREAS SOVIETS HAVE SOMETIMES RETALIATED AGAINST EMBASSY MOSCOW FOR PNG ACTION AGAINST SMUN OR UN PERSONNEL (E.G. KOVNER IN 1969), THEY HAVE NOT ALWAYS DONE SO. RELUCTANCE TO HEIGHTEN RISK THAT ACTION AGAINST STEPANOV MIGHT BE PUBLICIZED COULD ACT AS DETERRENT TO RETALIATORY ACTION IN THIS INSTANCE. NEVERTHELESS, WE CANNOT EXCLUDE POSSIBILITY.

2. I FEEL STRONGLY THAT SOVIETS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO RETALIATE WITH IMPUNITY AGAINST EMBASSY FOR ACTION TAKEN IN REGARD TO THEIR PERSONNEL ACCREDITED TO UN. THEREFORE, I RECOMMEND THAT A DECISION BE MADE IN PRINCIPLE THAT ANY RETALIATION AGAINST EMBASSY (WHETHER OR NOT DESIGNATED AS SUCH) BE ANSWERED WITH COMPARABLE ACTION AGAINST SOVIET EMBASSY WASHINGTON, AND THAT WE BE IN POSITION TO INFORM MFA OF THIS AT OUTSET SO THAT THERE WILL BE AT LEAST THEORETICAL OPPORTUNITY FOR THEM TO RECONSIDER THEIR ACTION AND WITHDRAW IT.

3. THEREFORE, I RECOMMEND THAT, IF I AM (OR DCM IS)

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CALLED TO MFA AND INFORMED OF EXPULSION ACTION AGAINST

MEMBER OF THIS EMBASSY, AND THERE IS NO REASONABLE GROUND
CITED FOR EXPULSION, THAT WE BE AUTHORIZED TO REPLY ALONG
FOLLOWING LINES:

A. SINCE REASONS CITED ARE CLEARLY NOT SUBSTANTIATED,
WE MUST CONSIDER SUCH ACTION AS IMPLICIT RETALIATION FOR
OUR ACTION IN REGARD TO STEPANOV;

B. RETALIATION ON STAFF OF OUR EMBASSY IN MOSCOW FOR
ACTION TAKEN AS RESULT OF MISCONDUCT OF SOVIET OFFICIALS
ACCREDITED TO UNITED NATIONS IS TOTALLY UNJUSTIFIED AND
UNACCEPTABLE TO US;

C. IF SOVIETS PERSIST IN TAKING THE ACTION THEY HAVE
INDICATED, SIMILAR ACTION IN REGARD TO SOVIET EMBASSY IN
WASHINGTON WILL BE INEVITABLE. THIS COULD HARDLY BE CONCEALED
FROM OUR PRESS AND COULD LEAD TO PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE OF STEPANOV
MATTER AS WELL;

D. THEREFORE, WE WOULD STRONGLY URGE THAT SOVIETS RE-
CONSIDER THEIR DECISION TO TAKE UNJUSTIFIED STEPS IN REGARD
TO MEMBER OF AMERICAN EMBASSY AND AVOID A CHAIN OF
EVENTS WHICH COULD BE MOST DAMAGING TO OUR EFFORTS TO
IMPROVE OUR RELATIONS AND TO SUSTAIN PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR
SUCH IMPROVEMENT.

4. OBVIOUSLY WE SHOULD NOT FOLLOW THIS LINE UNLESS WE ARE
PREPARED IN FACT TO TAKE RETALIATORY ACTION ACTION AGAINST
SOVIET EMBASSY. APPRECIATE YOUR COMMENTS.
STOESSEL

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NNN

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